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Promoting personal and family management of long-term conditions: Children and young people’s views on desirable components for an interactive health communication application (IHCA)

**Objective:**

To determine children and young people’s views on desirable components for a proposed interactive health communication application (IHCA) to promote personal and family management of their long-term condition

**Methods:**

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on sex, age and condition type. We conducted qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 26 children and young people (CYP) aged 5-19 years living with a range of long-term conditions. Interviews were conducted in the family home or a quiet space in the hospital with or without parents present depending on individuals’ preferences. Interviews were informed by topic guides developed respectively for 5-8, 9-12 and 13-19 year olds, and were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim and anonymised. Data were collected and analysed iteratively using the Framework Terchnique. As data management proceeded, emerging themes supplemented interview topics; this helped identify new lines of enquiry to pursue during on-going data collection. Constant comparison of data opened up meaning until no new themes emerged and theoretical saturation was reached when recruitment ceased.

**Results**

Analysis revealed three themes relating to desirable age-appropriate components for the proposed IHCA; (i) INTERACTIVE TEACHING: e.g. age-appropriate interactive games and activities that would help patients/families to learn about the condition and its management (ii) VIDEO LEARNING: videos of clinical procedure they need to perform at home to help patients/families learn to manage procedures themselves and reduce the need to ‘call on’ staff, and (iii) SOCIAL NETWORKING: to communicate with others of the same age with similar conditions through responsibly managed sites

**Conclusion:**

This design and methodology could be used to inform development of an IHCA involving age-appropriate, condition-specific resources to support home-based management of CYP living with neurological conditions.